

HALIFAX metro®

NEWS
WORTH
SHARING.

Christmas comes early for city's drivers

The price of gas fell to just over \$1 a litre — and industry analysts say it'll keep dropping **PAGE 6**

Cape Breton's weatherman extraordinaire

Meet the autistic man making his mark on social media and the blogosphere **PAGE 7**

Kimber: Time for Anonymous to walk the walk

Hacktivist group targets Nova Scotia Power, but are its members' threats empty? **PAGE 12**



STORMED OUT

RAINMEN FALL 113-106 TO STORM IN OVERTIME **PAGE 20**

Read all about it, Haligonians



People enjoy a Sunday afternoon from all angles at the newly opened Halifax Central Library. More on page 3. JEFF HARPER/METRO

129,000 sq. ft. About 20,000 people visit new downtown library on opening weekend

If you checked out the new Halifax Central Library this weekend, chances are you didn't have the place to yourself.

On Saturday alone, more than 10,000 people flocked to the branch and thousands more came on Sunday, according to Central Library director Bruce Gorman.

"I am ecstatic," Gorman said with a smile Sunday afternoon.

Gorman said his favourite part of the weekend has been watching people of all ages explore the five floors and study or hang out with their kids in places designed exactly for that.

He said the study pods were being constantly used since the library opened Saturday morning, but the 129,000-square-foot space was large enough for anyone to find a quiet corner.

"All the hard work we did and the result now, it's quite remarkable," Gorman said.

"This is verification that ...

we got it right."

The numbers are especially striking considering 450,000 people came to the old Spring Garden Memorial Library in one year, Gorman said.

Kurt Bulger, co-owner of Jennifer's of Nova Scotia just across from the new library, said he noticed about eight out of 10 people in the store were carrying books on Saturday.

"It was definitely busier than we expected," Bulger said Sunday.

Although a new library doesn't mean people will be constantly flocking to the Spring Garden area, Bulger said he's "cautiously optimistic" the library and projects like the Nova Centre can help downtown businesses.

"This is the first real investment by the city in Spring Garden in 30 years," he said.

Gorman said he had a hard time imagining exactly what the turnout would be like, but was moved to see residents and staff crying as the doors finally opened.

"The emotional nature of this was pretty poignant for a lot of people," Gorman said.

HALEY RYAN/METRO



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Books, yes, but so much more at the Halifax Central Library

'It's marvellous.'

Modern look and varied collection wow visitors of all ages

BRAEDON CLARK

halifax@metronews.ca

The Halifax Central Library opened its doors to a big and welcoming crowd on Saturday morning, with hundreds of people soaking in what many hope will be a new landmark in the city.

Those at the front of the line mid-morning were the first to see the library's 129,000 square feet of open and modern space, sometimes more reminiscent of an Apple Store than a traditional library.

Walkways criss-cross through the building's five floors, lending a sense of both functionality and beauty.

"It's marvellous," said Janet MacDonald as she looked up from the first floor. "We've been waiting a long time for something like this in Halifax, and it's nice to see our tax dollars go to a great project."

While the place is called the Halifax Central Library — and certainly there are plenty of books — there is also a lot more going on. Nowhere is that variety more evident than on the second floor, where the kids' area is a glorious mess of puzzles, books, tablets, video-game consoles and giant Lite-Brite displays. Everything has been designed with children in mind; even the tables and chairs are pint-sized.

In one corner of the kids'



People flood into the new Halifax Central Library on Saturday. The building's \$57.6-million price tag was shared by all three levels of government and helped by a fundraising campaign. BRAEDON CLARK/FOR METRO

area, four-year-old Arjun Parkash was engrossed in a game on a tablet. He looked to be changing the tires on a car, though he was too involved to explain exactly what he was doing.

"This is really wonderful; it's so bright and open," said Arjun's mother Sandhya.

Back on the main floor, there were long lineups of people waiting to sign up for library cards. The sound of cellos and violins floated

through the air as performers played at the 300-seat auditorium.

One man read the newspaper, earnestly digesting the details of the latest drop in oil prices. A woman browsed through the fantasy section, while others more or less wandered around, not quite sure where to start. The place was loud, buzzing like the world's biggest beehive.

It was, if nothing else, a very good way to start.

\$57.6 million

No shushing at this place

After the pomp and circumstance of the weekend, the less glamorous task of running the place begins in earnest.

For starters, there is a lot more inventory to deal with,

as the library's collection has expanded by 40 per cent compared to the old location — not to mention the complexity of all the new non-book components.

"This isn't your classic library," said Asa Kachan, CEO of Halifax Public Libraries. "It's OK to make noise in here and have a little fun."

TOP SIX @ 6
Weeknights at 6 Kat counts down the HOTTEST songs of the day

- 6 Jason Derulo Trumpets
- 5 Ariana Grande & The Weekend Love Me Harder
- 4 Mark Ronson ft Bruno Mars Uptown Funk!
- 3 Taylor Swift Blank Space
- 2 Sam Smith I'm Not The Only One
- 1 Nick Jonas Jealous

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1 NEWS

Almon St. Police consider woman's death suspicious

Halifax police are investigating a suspicious death in the city's north end after they say a 39-year-old woman was found dead in her home.

Around 1 p.m. Sunday, Halifax Regional Police said officers responded to a report of a death at a residence in the 5800 block of Almon Street.

Staff Sgt. Lindsay Hernden said someone had visited the residence, found the woman's body and called police.

Hernden said investigators with the major crime unit were on scene Sunday and canvassed the neighbourhood for information but there is no immediate concern or danger to anybody in the area.

"We are in the very early stages," Hernden said.

Forensic identification members and the medical examiner's office were also on scene Sunday, but Hernden said police could



Halifax police are investigating what they say is a suspicious death of a 39-year-old woman. METRO FILE

not yet say how the woman died.

Police are treating the death as suspicious based on evidence gathered so far, Hernden said, but since the investigation has just begin it may turn out the case is not suspicious.

"We'd rather be safe than sorry," Hernden said.

More information will be released as it becomes available, a release said.

HALEY RYAN/METRO

No charges laid

Police investigating man for false report on robbery at knife point

Police are investigating a case of public mischief after a 19-year-old man allegedly made a false allegation that he was robbed at knife point on Saturday night.

The victim told police he was robbed of money by two men who threatened him with a knife around 9:40 p.m. on Larry Uteck Drive.

After further investigation, police say the robbery never happened and the man misled them.

The 19-year-old from Sackville is now under investigation for public mischief but no charges have been laid. METRO

Fire review calls for station closures

Review launched in 2012. Five-year technology plan also suggested



RUTH DAVENPORT
ruth.davenport@metronews.ca

Halifax's fire chief will tell a municipal committee Monday about the "initial steps" needed to improve fire coverage in Halifax Regional Municipality, which include decommissioning seven fire halls, though no reductions in staff.

The operational review of fire services is the first such review since fire coverage in Halifax County was handled by 38 individual fire departments.

The first set of recommendations from the review, which was launched in 2012, will be presented to HRM's executive standing committee Monday.

A report suggests the recommendations are an "initial step in reconfiguring fire services and mapping the next steps in bringing together the necessary resources to ensure appropriate levels of fire coverage within the municipality."

The recommendations seek the committee's endorsement of consolidating equipment and personnel in the core fire stations, leading to the decom-



Firefighters on scene of a blaze last year in Halifax's north end. JEFF HARPER/METRO

missioning of stations on Lady Hammond, Patton Road and King Street.

"All three stations have overlapping catchment area coverage with nearby stations," states the report, adding that closing the stations will not result in any change to insurance ratings. "Staff will be redeployed to improve overall service delivery effectiveness."

The staff report cites low

volunteer numbers as the reason for decommissioning four rural fire stations with just five volunteers between them.

Like the three stations in the core, the report states that the stations in Ostrea Lake-Pleasant Point, East Ship Harbour, Meaghers Grant and Grand Lake-Oakfield all have catchment areas overlapped by adjacent volunteer stations that will remain operational.

Land and funding

Among the report's other recommendations are acquiring land immediately to begin building replacement stations for Bedford and Sackville; and providing \$1.9 million in funding for the first year of a five-year technology upgrade plan.

FAMILY EXTRAVAGANZA

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Shane Siddle. 20 years on, probe into death continues

Twenty years after Shane Siddle died at the Victoria General Hospital, police continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding his death.

Siddle died of head injuries on Dec. 12, 1994 after staff at the hospital called police to inform them



Shane Siddle.
CONTRIBUTED

of Siddle's injuries, the cause of which remains unknown.

A subsequent investigation has revealed that Siddle may have been involved in an altercation and knocked unconscious near his Belle Aire Terrace residence on the night of Dec. 7, 1994.

That original assault was never reported, and police believe there are people who have information that could lead to arrests and/or charges being laid.

METRO

Double murder. Police look for info on 2nd anniversary

Two years after the murders of Earle Stewart and Matthew Hebb, police are still looking for answers.

The bodies of Stewart, 59, and Hebb, 22 were found on Dec. 12, 2012, at the site of a hunting camp near Sheet Harbour. The bodies were found after a fire was put out at the camp.

A man and a woman were arrested six days after the bodies were found, but were

later released without charges.

Officers from the Major Crimes unit of the Integrated Criminal Investigation Division continue to investigate the case two years later.

"This is an active investigation," said Cpl. Greg Church of Halifax District RCMP.

"We want to re-engage the public for assistance in solving these crimes."

METRO

RCMP. Sexual assault complaint against officer

Nova Scotia's Serious Incident Response Team is investigating a sexual assault allegation against an RCMP officer.

The independent group says a woman reported to police Friday that she was searched and touched inappropriately by a male officer during a traffic stop a day earlier.

The RCMP asked the team to investigate the allegation, but is also doing its own re-

Digby

The alleged incident happened during a traffic stop on Highway 101 near Exit 25 in Digby.

view of the complaint.

The Police Act gives the team jurisdiction over the investigation of sexual assault allegations made against police officers. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Hants County

Guns and drugs seized during raid

Police seized several guns, ammunition and marijuana while executing a search warrant in Hants County Thursday. Two men were arrested.

Kyle Irving Lawrence, 25, has been charged with seven counts of careless use of a firearm, unauthorized possession of a firearm and trafficking marijuana. Darren Leonard Lawrence, 29, has been charged with careless use of a firearm. **METRO**

Dartmouth

Pedestrian hit by car gets ticketed

A 68-year-old man has been issued a ticket after he was hit by a car in Dartmouth on Friday at 1:49 p.m. while trying to cross Wyse Road.

He suffered non-life-threatening injuries and was transported to hospital. The driver of the vehicle wasn't hurt.

The pedestrian was issued a ticket for crossing outside of a crosswalk zone, carrying a fine of \$406.45. **METRO**



The price of gas continues to drop, getting closer and closer to \$1 per litre. The latest drop is seen at an Esso station in Bedford. **BRAEDON CLARK/FOR METRO**

Gas prices will keep dropping: Analyst

Nearing a four-year low. Halifax closing in on less than \$1 a litre

BRAEDON CLARK

For Metro

It's something that many people thought they'd never see again; the price of gas hovering around \$1 per litre.

Yet, that's what motorists in Halifax woke up to on Friday morning, as the price fell nearly seven cents overnight, settling in at 101.7 at most gas stations.

"It's hard to believe how much the price has gone down," said Shannon Jones as she filled up at an Esso station in Bedford. "It's a nice little Christmas gift, that's for sure."

According to gasbuddy.com, a price tracking website, the cost of gas in Nova Scotia is down nearly 25 per cent since the summer, when prices were around \$1.40 per litre. If the price drops below \$1, it will be the first time in more than four years.

"I think you'll see the price dip below a buck in the next week or two," said Dave Collins, vice president of Wil-

Quoted

"I'll take it while I can get it."

Shannon Jones

sons Fuels. "The price of oil doesn't seem to be finding a bottom — it just keeps dropping."

Most of the savings at the pump can be traced back to the declining price of crude oil, which is currently sitting at \$60 per barrel, well down from the \$100 price it has been trading at for most of the past few years.

That is having an impact on the Canadian dollar, which is now below 86 cents U.S.

While the drop in gas prices might seem like nothing but good news, Collins cautions that there's more to it than that.

"If we are an oil exporting country — and we are — then the low price of oil hurts us," he said. "It might be good in the short term, but it's bad in the long term."

Collins expects that the price of gas will remain low through much of 2015 before rebounding to a more familiar level.

Overnight winter parking ban begins Monday

The overnight winter parking ban in the city goes into effect for another season on Monday.

The ban will be the same as last year, and will only be enforced during snow or ice events from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m.

Anyone parked on the

street during storms can be ticketed or towed.

The city is again sending notifications to residents through phone, email and text messages to let them know when the ban will be in place.

People can go to hrmcity-

watch.halifax.ca to register.

If you signed up last winter, you are automatically on the list to receive notifications.

The ban is scheduled to remain in place until March 15.

METRO

Info line

311

The number to call if you have any questions about the overnight winter parking ban.

Many rookie MPs to run in 2015 election

'Big responsibility'.

All but two young NDP MPs have committed to running for re-election

In 2011, Mylène Freeman became a New Democrat member of Parliament almost by accident. In 2015, she intends to be elected on purpose.

Freeman, 25, is one of a half-dozen MPs who were barely in their 20s in 2011 when a surge of support for the NDP in Quebec saw them become MPs, despite never having set foot in their ridings during the campaign.

Questions swirled about whether this rookie class would last even a single sitting. Not only did they prevail, but so far all but two have committed to running for re-election in 2015.

Only 19 when he was elected, NDP MP Pierre-Luc Dusseault had the distinction of becoming the youngest person ever voted into the House of



NDP MPs Matthew Dubé (left), Laurin Liu, Mylène Freeman, and Charmaine Borg, all McGill University students, arrive on Parliament Hill on May 19, 2011.

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Commons. He didn't say much for the first little while, but slowly found his voice.

"You have such big responsibility and if you want to succeed you have to work, work hard, work every day," Dusseault said.

It's not just Freeman and Dusseault going into 2015 a little wiser. All of Parliament has been forced to grow up a little.

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau suspended MPs Massimo Pacetti and Scott Andrews from

caucus last month amid explosive allegations of "serious personal misconduct" involving two of their NDP counterparts.

Though whispers of impropriety have coursed through the halls of power in Ottawa for decades, the suspension forced Parliament to confront it publicly for the first time and examine how ill-equipped it is to deal with the interpersonal realities of a modern workplace.

"This place isn't built for women," Freeman said. Ironically — and unbeknownst to her — a male colleague from another party could be seen taking note of her physique as he passed behind her while she spoke. A harassment prevention policy was implemented this past week.

Parliament also learned it was not immune from security threats. Cpl. Nathan Cirillo was shot dead Oct. 22 at the National War Memorial, moments before gunman Michael Zehaf Bibeau stormed the Centre Block, where he died in a gun battle with security. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



Zzzzzzz ... Santa and baby need a nap

Ten-week-old Jaxson Schieman curls up for a nap with Santa at the Rideau Centre mall in Ottawa on Sunday.

LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO IN OTTAWA

Iqaluit

Nunavut suffering hunger pangs

The line-up for Iqaluit's soup kitchen stretches out the door, down a flight of wooden steps and onto the icy street.

Inside, Cathy Sawyer stirs a large pot brimming with chicken soup, enough for 200 servings. The 65-year-old and

fellow volunteers have been in the kitchen since 8 a.m., preparing a lunch that will be the only meal of the day for many of those waiting.

In the wake of a November report from the federal auditor general critiquing the government's food-subsidy program, footage emerged of Rankin Inlet residents foraging in the town dump. Even the UN has weighed in.

Nunavut MP, Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq, insists hunger in the North has been exaggerated.

"We have some momentum on this issue," said Ed McKenna, director of Nunavut's Anti-Poverty Secretariat.

Yet, food insecurity — defined as a lack of access to healthy, affordable food — is not a new phenomenon in Nunavut. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Vice-president of Health Quality Ontario, Dr. Irfan Dhalla, is seen in this undated photo. Dramatic improvements are needed to provide quality palliative care for patients facing the end of their lives, including boosting the number of health providers trained in specialized care of the dying, says an Ontario health agency. HANDOUT/ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

End-of-life care improvements needed: Agency

Health Quality Ontario. A report shows 70 per cent of palliative care patients prefer comfort over life-prolonging efforts

Dramatic improvements are needed to provide quality palliative care for all patients facing the end of their lives, including boosting the number of health providers trained in specialized care of the dying, says an Ontario health advisory agency.

Yet the issue is becoming more pressing due to the aging population: by 2026, the number of Canadians dying each year will increase by 40 per cent to 330,000 people, with each death affecting the well-being of five other people on average — families and loved ones — or more than 1.6 million people in all, the report says.

"There certainly are some real pockets of excellence," Dr. Irfan Dhalla, vice-president of Health Quality Ontario, said of the availability of comprehensive palliative care.

"But there are also areas in Ontario where patients don't have access to that kind of care, and the best estimates are that only about 30 per cent of people who are dying have access to specialized team-based palliative care," said Dhalla, who's also an internal medicine specialist at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto.

In a report released Monday, Health Quality Ontario said that although Canada ranks relatively high on an international index measuring "quality of death," hundreds of thousands of Canadians have no access to co-ordinated end-of-life care.

Polls have shown that most Canadians want to die at home, surrounded by their loved ones. But most people end up dying in hospital, he said, resulting in some patients not getting the care they would like to have.

For instance, the report cites a survey which found that 70 per cent of hospitalized elderly patients wanted comfort measures instead of life-prolonging treatment. However, more than half were admitted to intensive care units.

"Patient choice and preferences are essential to the delivery of high-quality care," said Dr. Joshua Tepper, president and CEO of Health Quality Ontario and a family physician who treats patients at all stages, including as they near the end of their lives.

"In order to guarantee the best care for patients, it is necessary to recognize that death is an intensely personal experience which must be guided through discussions in advance with medical professionals and loved ones."

The report also provides evidence to support the need for public discussion about the normalization and de-medicalization of death and dying.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Foreign workers killed in weekend crash

Two involved in a fatal highway crash in Alberta Saturday were newly married, said members of the Filipino community.

Three people were killed in the collision on Highway 11 and Range Road 4-2 Saturday after a Ford Mustang hit the ditch and then overcompensated, colliding with a moving truck driving in the next lane.

Two male passengers and one female passenger were declared dead on scene, while the male driver was transported to

the University of Alberta Hospital and is in critical condition.

RCMP has confirmed the victims of the crash were temporary foreign workers returning to Rocky Mountain House after language training in Red Deer and believe that driver inexperience could have been a factor in the crash.

According to long-time member of the Edmonton Filipino Lyla Gray, two of the crash victims had worked at Dairy Queen and were married

just two months ago, with the groom only arriving in Canada before the wedding.

"I was so shocked and all of the Filipinos are shocked also. It happened again after two weeks," said Gray.

Last month, four people — also temporary foreign workers from the Philippines — were killed while driving on Highway 21 near Leduc.

"(We're) sad because I don't know why it's happening in Alberta," Gray said, adding that

there needs to be more education for newcomers to Canada about winter driving.

"In the Philippines where we come from there's no snow so it's very hard to adjust when (we) come here," she said.

Gray said she often warns people not to drive in the winter due to unsafe conditions.

At the time of the crash, all of the victims had been sending their earnings home to relatives in the Philippines.

LEAH HOLODAY/METRO IN EDMONTON

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Nicaragua

18 missing from capsized boat

Rescue crews in Nicaragua say they have found a fishing boat that capsized in the Caribbean last week with 50 people aboard.

Eighteen fishermen who were aboard the lobster boat MN Wayward Wind remain missing. It overturned

about 35 nautical miles (65 kilometres) southeast of Puerto Cabezas.

Vilma Garcia, the wife of one of eight men rescued Friday, said her husband Porfilio Levy, 36, suffered dehydration and severe sunburn and died a day later.

The boat was on a 15-day trip when it was hit by a huge wave Tuesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

China

Ten miners killed in explosion

Ten Chinese miners were found dead Sunday hours after they were trapped underground in an explosion at a mine in the northeastern province of Heilongjiang, state media said.

The cause of the incident at the Xingyun Mine

in the city of Jixi was under investigation, the state-run China News Service said.

China's mines are the world's deadliest, although a push to boost safety has lowered death tolls in accidents.

Just over 1,000 deaths in 604 coal mining accidents were reported in 2013, down from more than 6,000 per year a decade ago.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Congo

Boat death toll could exceed 129

Authorities say at least 129 people are dead in Congo after a boat sank on a lake in southeastern Congo.

Laurent Kahozi Sumba, the transport minister for Katanga province, said Sunday 129 bodies have been recovered and there are 232

known survivors.

Many boats in Congo carry far more people and cargo than are listed.

The disaster is believed to have happened early Friday.

The MV Mutambala was a private boat that connected towns in Katanga and South Kivu provinces. Kahozi said an investigation is underway.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Compromise deal reached on climate

Watered down. Rich, poorer countries disagree on who should do what to fight global warming

Quoted

"The text went from weak to weaker to weakest and it's very weak indeed."

Sam Smith, chief of climate policy for the environmental group WWF, on the agreement.

Climate negotiators salvaged a compromise deal in Lima early Sunday that sets the stage for a global pact in Paris next year, but rejected a rigorous review of the greenhouse gas emissions limits they plan.

More than 30 hours behind schedule, delegates from more than 190 countries agreed on what information should go into the pledges that countries submit for the expected Paris pact.

They argued all day Saturday over the wording of the decision, with developing nations worried that the text blurred the distinction between what rich and poor countries can be expected to do.

The final draft said coun-

tries have "common but differentiated responsibilities" to deal with global warming.

The momentum from last month's joint U.S.-China deal on emissions targets faded quickly in Lima as rifts reopened over who should do what to fight global warming.

The approved draft weakened language on the content of the pledges, saying they "may" instead of "shall" include quantifiable information showing how countries intend to meet their emissions targets.

"I think it's definitely watered down from what we expected," said Alden Meyer of the Union of Concerned Scientists. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Protest over shootings moves to church pews

Senior Judge Theodore Newman, of the Historic Courthouse, wearing a "Hands Up, Don't Shoot" shirt, raises his clenched fist during a church service at the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington Sunday. Congregants in African-American churches across the U.S. wore black to Sunday services in a symbolic stand against police shootings of unarmed black men.

MANUEL BALCE CENETA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Possible hostage incident in Australia

A major police operation was underway Monday in downtown Sydney, Australia.

Several people inside a chocolate shop and cafe could be seen through the windows with their hands held in the air.

New South Wales state police would not say what was happening inside the Lindt Chocolat Cafe or whether hostages were being held.

But television footage shot through the cafe's windows showed several people with their arms in the air and hands pressed against the glass.

The footage showed two people inside the cafe holding up what appeared to be a black flag with white Arabic writing on it.

Heavily-armed officers were seen lined up outside

the cafe.

A police spokeswoman said no injuries had been reported from the incident.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott said the National Security Committee of Cabinet met to be briefed on the situation.

"This is obviously a deeply concerning incident but all Australians should be reassured that our law

enforcement and security agencies are well trained and equipped and are responding in a thorough and professional manner," Abbott said in a statement.

The cafe is located in Martin Place, a plaza in the heart of the city's financial and shopping district that is packed with holiday shoppers this time of year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At least 32 dead, 76 missing in Indonesian landslide



Rescuers try to pull out the body of a landslide victim in Jemblung, Central Java, Indonesia, on Sunday. A.K. HENDRATMO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rescuers pulled more bodies from the debris Sunday after heavy rain in central Indonesia loosened soil and collapsed a hill, setting off a landslide that killed at least 32 villagers and left 76 others missing under piles of mud.

About 2,000 rescuers, including soldiers, police and volunteers, were digging through the mud and the wreckage of crumpled homes, getting some relief from clear weather following days of heavy rain. Ex-

cavators, meanwhile, shoved aside earth and the remains of decimated wooden homes.

Residents of Jemblung village in Central Java province's Banjarnegara district said they heard a roaring sound followed by the raining down of red soil that buried more than 100 houses late Friday.

"The landslide looked like it was spinning down," said one resident, Subroto, who like many Indonesians uses only one name.

He said one side of the hill collapsed, then another.

"In five minutes, there were three (major landslides) and they swept away everything," Subroto said.

By late afternoon Sunday, 32 bodies had been pulled from the debris, while hopes faded that the 76 people still missing would be found alive, said Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, the spokesman for Indonesia's Disaster Mitigation Agency.

Banjarnegara is located on Indonesia's most densely populated island of Java, about 460 kilometres east of Jakarta. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hill collapse

Villager Wayan Wahyuni, a 20-year-old farmer, says he saw his grandfather and neighbours buried alive.

- The mud was more than six metres deep in some spots.

- Wahyuni himself was buried up to his chest until he was rescued seven hours later.

Waze. Quest to outsmart traffic app fails miserably

Los Angeles residents whose homes hug a warren of streets next to the busiest urban freeway in the U.S. were baffled when they saw bumper-to-bumper traffic on their streets a year ago.

When word spread that the explosively popular new smartphone app Waze was sending many of those cars through their neighbourhood in a quest to shave five minutes off a daily rush-hour commute, they were angry and ready to fight back.

They figured they would outsmart the app, some said, by using it to report

phony car crashes and traffic jams on their streets that would keep the shortcut-seekers away.

Months later, the cars are still there, and the people are still mad.

That's because the app can't be outsmarted, Waze spokeswoman Julie Mossler said.

"With millions of users in L.A., fake, co-ordinated traffic reports can't come to fruition because they'll be negated by the next 10 people that drive down the street passively using Waze," she said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Low oil prices

OPEC chief calls for oilfield investment

The secretary-general of OPEC on Sunday urged Gulf Arab nations to keep investing in oilfield development despite the plunge in crude prices and gave no indication the cartel was prepared to shift its

strategy to halt the slide.

Oil prices have shed nearly half their value since late June, including a four per cent tumble Friday that left benchmark U.S. oil prices at \$57.81 US a barrel — their lowest level since May of 2009, when the U.S. was still in recession.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Schools must do a better job of teaching money basics: Expert

Money, money, money.

Canadian educators need to do more to help our young learn about balancing their books

Educators across Canada are increasingly seeing the value of teaching kids the basics of money management at a young age, but some experts warn the patchwork of programs being offered in schools can only go so far in helping students avoid major money pitfalls down the line.

School systems in several provinces — including Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan — have in recent years added elements of financial literacy to the core classes taught through elementary and high school, while British Columbia more than a decade ago created a mandatory Grade 10 financial life skills class.

But in order to make those



lessons truly sink in, schools must have a designated financial capability curriculum that's applied across the board, some experts say.

"Unless you have a focused, consistent curriculum designed specifically and implemented across the majority of grades, so it knows where it ended last year and it's going to pick up and add more infor-

mation it's never going to work," said Gail Vaz-Oxlade, the financial guru behind the TV show Til Debt Do Us Part and author of Money-Smart Kid\$ and other books.

"And the problem we have right now is that by using the word money or using money context for traditional lessons, (school) boards are convincing parents that they're

putting financial literacy into schools — but they're not," Vaz-Oxlade said.

In Ontario, the focus in the classroom is largely on the math aspect of money management, "but those things are not the issue in terms of how to deal well with money," she said. "The issue in terms of how to deal well with money are things like you can't spend more money than you make."

A 2012 study by the Investor Education Fund found only 40 per cent of participating Ontario high school students felt somewhat or very prepared to manage their finances after graduation, and roughly a quarter said their schools gave them most or all the financial information they needed.

Sixty-nine per cent said they thought personal finance should be taught in the classroom, according to the study, which was based on an online poll of 400 high school students. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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VOICES

WHY SO ANONYMOUS?

If the hacktivist group really has damning dirt on Nova Scotia Power and Stephen McNeil, it should share that information with us immediately



STEPHEN KIMBER
halifax@metronews.ca

"Transparency," explains the computer-altered voice belonging to the person behind the mustachioed, comic-book smirk mask, "is of the utmost importance."

Irony, it would appear, is lost on Anonymous, the self-anointed Secret Santa sheriff of the Internet netherworld.

Late last week, Anonymous Maritimes, an apparent branch plant of the leaderless worldwide network of you-are-one-if-you-say-you-are Internet "hacktivists" (which began in 2008 with an attempt to "take down" the Church of Scientology) issued its

latest YouTube manifesto.

"Greetings, citizens of Nova Scotia," the three-minute-and-25-second message began, after a suitably news-flashy opening featuring a spinning globe, ominous music and the ubiquitous headless suited man. "We are Anonymous."

The issue that has Anonymous's knickers in a knot this week is one that bothers many of us: electricity rates. They're too high. Most of Anonymous's so-called demands — "reasonable and balanced" rates, no disconnecting power just because people can't afford to pay, basing rates on actual rather than estimated usage, a wage freeze and end to excessive executive bonuses — resonate. But they are garden-variety frustrations you can hear in any Tim

Hortons any morning anywhere in our city... from people who are more than happy to put their names to their complaints.

So why does Anonymous need to be... well, anonymous?

"We have information that will confirm there is corruption and more coming to us every day (sic)," Faceless Disembodied Voice declares.

Really?

Anonymous seems to be threatening to release this evidence — "We intend to make an example of you" — if Nova Scotia Power and "Mr. Stephen McNeil" don't bow to its blackmail.

Forget for the moment that power rates are complicated. Fossil fuels, carbon, climate

change... Why wait, Anon?

If the corruption is serious enough to make politicians and corporate executives cower — effectively forcing them into changing policies and reducing power rates (Earth to Anonymous: heard of the Utility and Review Board, which regulates power rates?) — then surely we should all know exactly what Anonymous has uncovered.

If Anonymous actually released evidence of corruption at Nova Scotia Power, its members might be able to justify hiding behind their cutesy masks and voice-altering software.

But they aren't. For now, they're just blusters, hiding their faces.

And playing their games.

Your Halifax



Cheering for the Rainmen

Members of the Weather Girls perform prior to a Halifax Rainmen basketball game at the Scotiabank Centre on Sunday afternoon.

JEFF HARPER/METRO

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Send us high-resolution
snaps of your city to
readers@metronews.ca

Upcoming

Annual lighting of the menorah held this week

The 20th annual lighting of the menorah at Halifax City Hall takes place on Wednesday at 6 p.m. at Grand Parade. The large-scale menorah that is being lit was initiated by the Chabad Lubavitch Organization as a way to promote awareness and appreciation for Hanukkah, which is held over eight days. "Halifax is a diverse community that reflects many religious faiths, and on Wednesday we will join together to celebrate an important Hanukkah tradition," Halifax Mayor Mike Savage says in a statement. A candle will be lit each additional night for Hanukkah. A reception will also be held in Halifax Hall at city hall at 7 p.m. following the official lighting ceremony.

METRO

No skating in circles on the oval just yet

The opening of the Emera skating oval at the Halifax Common is on hold. Monday was scheduled to be the first day of skating, but due to above-normal temperatures, the new day for the season to begin is now Wednesday. The new date, of course, is weather permitting. Each year, tens of thousands of people skate on the oval, making it one of the most popular winter activities put on by the city.

METRO

Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON
THE WORLD OF
CELEBRITIES



Iggy Azalea ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Even if Iggy were born a man, he would never be called Cody

Some stars just ignore all the weird rumours that go around about them, and some offer firm but boilerplate denials.

But, every once in a great while, some find just the right way to brush off the gossip while coming off as awesome in the process.

Case in point? Iggy Azalea

actually deigned to respond to bizarre rumors that she wasn't always a girl named Iggy.

"Wait, so I'm just now reading that I was born a man and my name is Cody?" she posted to Twitter, following up with, "I just don't see myself as a Cody. I'm more of a Liam, if I had a penis."

You win this round of the Internet, Ms. Azalea.

Oh, and she was understandably worried about how these new revelations would affect her career.

"Am I still gonna get my Billboard women in music award tomorrow, now that I supposedly have a penis or nah," she tweeted.

Queen's garden adds magic to her majesty

During The Queen's Garden, a TV special set to air in the U.K. at Christmas, horticulturist Alan Titchmarsh apparently stumbled upon some magic mushrooms in the gardens of Buckingham Palace.

"It's eaten in some cultures for its hallucinogenic effects, but it also makes people who eat it very sick," an ecology professor explains to Titchmarsh, according to the Telegraph.

"The old-fashioned thing to do was to feed it to the village idiot, then drink his urine, because you get all of the high without any of the sickness."

Well, then!

But don't get too excited about any Royal Family vision quests just yet. A Pal-

ace spokesman was quick to tell the Sun that "fungi from the garden are not used in the Palace kitchen."

But man, if they were? That could really liven up the Queen's Christmas Day address.

Oh well. Instead, maybe some commoners can sneak in, chow down on the mushrooms and have a great time saying Titchmarsh's name over and over again.



Queen Elizabeth

Panettiere 'over the moon' that she is no longer the shortest in her family

Nashville star Hayden Panettiere has a baby girl, just in time for Christmas.

The pint-sized actress gave birth to daughter Kaya Evdokia Klitschko last week, her first child with much taller fiancé Vladimir Klitschko, her rep confirms to People magazine.

"We are over the moon and madly in love," the new parents say in a statement.

The couple announced their engagement in October. No word yet on whether baby Kaya will take after the taller or the shorter side of the family.



Hayden Panettiere



Marco Perego and Zoe Saldana

Zoe Saldana is ecstatic to finally 'drop' her twin boys

Speaking of celebrity birthings, Guardians of the Galaxy star Zoe Saldana gave birth to twins last week, as reported by the Daily Mirror. The babies — rumoured to be twin boys — mark the first children for Saldana and husband Marco Perego.

"Zoe and Marco are delighted. Zoe has been ready to drop for some time, and they are both ecstatic to be meeting the twins," a source with a penchant for over-sharing tells the newspaper. Seriously, "ready to drop for some time"?

To dream or not to dream? Christian has the answer

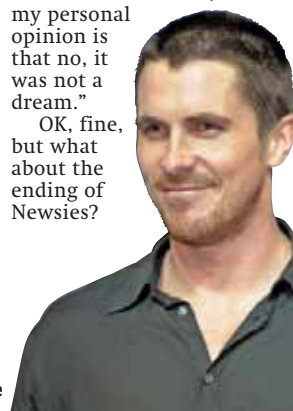
You know who's a good authority about Christopher Nolan's Batman films? Bruce Wayne himself, Christian Bale, who's happy to set people straight on some of their wilder theories.

For instance, there are fans who believe the ending of Dark Knight Rises, in which Michael Caine's Alfred sees Bruce Wayne alive and well in Florence, is all a dream. Well, Bale says you're wrong.

"That was for real," Bale says during an Entertainment Weekly radio chat. "I find it very interesting."

With most films, I tend to always say it's what the audience thinks it is, but my personal opinion is that no, it was not a dream."

OK, fine, but what about the ending of Newsies?



Christian Bale

2 SCENE

Review



Teenage Mutant
Ninja Turtles

Director. Jonathan Liebesman

Stars. Megan Fox

Cowabungle! This gang of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles feels like they've been shell-shocked since their last live-action go-round 24 years ago.

Michael Bay takes lead producer credit for this dud — directing blame goes to Jonathan Liebesman (Battle Los Angeles) — but the Transformers tyrant's greasy paw prints are all over this movie. Even the Turtles' pizza, a product plug for Pizza Hut, is just another of Bay's blatant cash grabs. The original 1980s comic book creations were a parody of superhero sagas.

Something has been lost. The turtles are now conjured by motion capture, CGI and voiceover instead of having actors in cuddly rubber suits as before. And while the 2014 versions arguably look more "real" than their 1990 counterparts, they aren't nearly as charming.

PETER HOWELL

Behold the rise of the YouTubers

Virtual stardom. More and more entertainers are flipping on their webcams and building their own audiences

When Lilly Singh arrived on the set of the Kunal Nayyar movie Dr. Cabbie earlier this year, she faced a bit of a learning curve.

The 26-year-old already had millions of fans and was regularly mobbed by teenage girls at the mall. But the Markham, Ont.-based star wasn't a famous actress or pop singer — she was a YouTuber.

"I went on set and I just started acting right away. They were like, 'No, no, we need to call action,'" Singh recalled with a laugh during a recent telephone interview.

"I'm like, 'You have to call action? What do you mean? No one calls action for me. I call action!'"

Singh is among a new generation of entertainers who are finding massive success on YouTube. With self-produced, low-budget videos, YouTubers are attracting devoted fan followings, earning steady paycheques and increasingly landing film roles, TV shows and record deals.

On her channel IISuperwomanII, Singh posts comedy videos twice a week for her 4.4 million subscribers. She typically shoots them in her parents' house in Markham, where she lives. She plays multiple characters — male and female — with a

The money

For those curious about how YouTubers earn money, YouTuber and Toronto comedian Megan MacKay said she is paid through the site's partner program, which places advertising on and around her video content. With YouTube taking 45 per cent off the top, a million hits makes her about two thousand dollars. "It's not like, 'I'm filling a swimming pool with money and I'm going to swim in it for the rest of my life' money, but it's the job. It is a job for a lot of people," she said.

goofy, refreshing lack of self-consciousness.

With videos like How Girls Get Ready and Types of Kids at School, Singh has fostered a largely suburban, teenage female audience. She often finds humour in her relationship with her Indian parents, frequently donning a fake beard and thick accent to portray her dad.

"I don't feel the need to be this perfect, very pretty type of person, and I think my fans really relate to that," said Singh. "A lot of times they tell me, 'You're so real, and you make me OK with being myself.'"

Singh said her upbringing in Scarborough, a diverse suburb of Toronto, greatly influenced her comedic style. One of her first videos to go viral was titled (Stuff) Punjabi Mothers Say, which has now

been viewed more than four million times.

"When I first started, inevitably (my fan base was) majority Indian, because my videos were titled, like, 'My Indian parents so-and-so.' Now, I don't do that anymore because I very quickly realized you don't have to put Indian in the title because it applies to everyone, for the most part," she said.

"Even if I'm talking about my (South) Asian parents, I can do it in a way that someone who has Jamaican parents, or Chinese parents, they can relate to it as well."

YouTube creates room for alternative voices that aren't well-represented in mainstream media, said Aubrey Anable, an instructor at the University of Toronto's Department of Visual Studies who has studied digital culture. "There are a lot of YouTube celebrities that are minorities, or their type of performance or what they are doing on YouTube is not something that can be easily found in mainstream media culture," she said.

She said YouTube stardom is distinct from traditional TV and film fame because of a greater sense of intimacy between creator and fan. Often YouTubers shoot their videos in domestic spaces like bedrooms, directly address their fans and appeal to them to subscribe or leave a comment. "All of these are unique to YouTube and I think it creates this sense of connection between amateur YouTube celebrities and their fans," she said.

Of course, the line between YouTube and the mainstream

entertainment industry is becoming increasingly blurred, Anable said. Not only are pop stars and TV networks setting up YouTube channels to promote and share their products, but YouTube stars like Singh are landing roles in feature films.

Famously, Justin Bieber was first discovered because of his YouTube videos.

Grace Helbig, an American YouTube star who recently published a book, Grace's Guide: The Art of Pretending to be a Grown-Up, said the online video platform suits her introverted nature.

"I feel there's a common thread in a lot of online content creators. There's an introvertedness there that I think is just a personal attribute that's shared among the community," she said in an interview last month. "I think it's like a group of introverted control freaks are basically YouTubers. It's people that like owning what they do and like being the boss of what they do, but also enjoy quieter moments alone."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

YouTube sensation Lilly Singh made her mark playing multiple characters and poking fun at suburban life.

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How to rise from the debt

Your money. Figure out if you're carrying too much debt and what to do about it if you are



GAIL VAZ-OXLADE
Gail blogs daily at gailvazoxlade.com

Our tolerance for debt has gone way, way up. Some folks believe everyone's got some debt. Hey, if you have a mortgage that's manageable, I've got no beef with you.

But if you're carrying even a penny in consumer debt — balances on your credit card or line of credit, overdraft, buy-now-pay-later loans — it is too much debt.

That being said, I know that there are folks who are trying to get rid of their debt.

If you're spending up to 15 per cent of your income for debt repayment (not including your car payments and your mortgage), you're on your way to debt freedom.

To calculate what percentage of your income you're spending on debt repayment, add up your monthly debt repayment amounts (not including car payments and mortgage), divide that by your monthly take-home pay, and multiply it by 100.

If you're spending \$670 a month paying off your credit cards, student loans, line of credit, furniture loan, or whatever else, and you make \$3,100 net a month, your calculation would look like this: $670 / 3100 \times 100 = 21.6\%$

If you're spending 15 per cent or less of your monthly income paying off your debt



Get that money burden off your back by paying off your debt. ISTOCK

then you're probably OK from a cash-flow perspective. If you're spending more than that, uh-oh!

The words "paying off" are important. If you're spending 15 per cent or more of your income just meeting your minimum monthly payments you're gonna be in debt for a long, long, long, long time and you're going to pay *gobs* of interest.

Have you looked at the line at the bottom of your credit card statement that says, "If you make only the minimum payment each month (on

your \$6,369.36 balance), we estimate it will take 55 years and 10 months to fully repay the outstanding balance."

Cripes! (Taken directly off my credit card statement that I paid in full immediately!)

If you have a \$3,000 balance on a credit card charging 14.98 per cent interest, and pay a two per cent minimum every month, it will take 26 years to pay off your balance and cost you a total of \$7,440 in interest. Seriously, that stuff you bought on sale just cost you three times as much as you planned!

Why are you doing this to yourself?

- 1 Admit you have a problem. Say it out loud right now: "I have a problem with my debt." If you aren't prepared to admit you're in trouble, no one can help you. If you aren't prepared to add up the mess you're in, quit your whining. If you want things to change, start by saying, "I have a problem with my debt."
- 2 Write down every penny you spend. Whether you spend \$1.25 for coffee or \$600 on a fabulous new pair of shoes, write it down. This is how you become accountable for forfeiting your future in the name of an immediate pleasure. When you look over your list at night — yes, you have to look over the list every night — ask yourself why you're really buying. Did you get a rush? Did you feel pleasure? How are you feeling now?
- 3 Switch from credit to cash. It is way easier to charge something than it is to fork over cold, hard cash.
- 4 Commit to paying off your debt. Grab a calculator and figure out how much it will take each month to be out of debt by a specific date. Then allocate the majority of the money to paying off your most expensive debt first while you make minimum payments on the other debts. Once your first debt is paid off, reallocate that money to your next most expensive debt. Keep going till you're out of the hole.
- 5 If you must find a way to make more money to get out of debt, so be it. You played and now it's time to pay. More work may be what it takes. The upside: You'll be so busy earning, you'll have very little time or energy left to spend. Life is expensive enough. Get rid of the interest costs so you can use your money for *you* instead of making some lender richer!

Here are 5 more signs you may be in over your head:

1. If you find that you seem to have less and less money for things like food.
2. If you keep dipping into your savings, keep trying to refinance, or have to take a payday advance loan.
3. If you keep hitting the ceiling on your credit cards. As you pay your balance, do a balance transfer to reduce your costs, or refinance in some other way, you're right back to

the limit on your credit in no time flat.

4. If you can't find two red cents to put into an emergency fund. No emergency fund means that the first time trouble rears its ugly head, you'll be right back to using credit to fill your financial gap.

5. If you can't sleep at night — if you toss and turn or awake in a cold sweat — you're in trouble.

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When and how to wean kids off gift list

It's a discussion some families have in the lead-up to the holidays. Others avoid it because it can be awkward; everyone isn't always on the same page.

But side-stepping dilemmas rarely solves them, so let's just put it out there. If you buy holiday gifts for the children in your extended family, does there come a point when you can stop?

Sadly, there appears to be no single answer. But some etiquette experts have offered suggestions to help.

Let's start with Judith Martin, better known as Miss Manners, who says an import-

ant point to keep in mind is that there is no need to stop buying gifts for nieces and nephews. If you enjoy doing so, you may continue.

Should you wish, however, to at some point transition from giving gifts to sending a seasonal letter or card, Martin suggests a surprisingly tender age as a potential demarcation point.

"The first cut-off would be ... children who have learned to write but don't," Martin says with a bit of bite to her delivery.

She refers, of course, to children who do not pen thank-you notes to express

gratitude for the presents they have been sent.

Anna Post of the Emily Post Institute suggests the point at which children stop going out for Halloween might be a time when you could think about altering gift-giving patterns, if that is a goal.

Karen Cleveland, the Toronto-based writer of the blog *Finishing School*, suggests the point at which nieces and nephews start to earn an income might also be a reasonable time to discontinue gift-giving.

All three agree the question isn't simply "when?" but "how?"

Post suggests using transition gifts, moving at a point to buying a small token gift — a lovely Christmas tree ornament, if Christmas is the holiday being celebrated — rather than a larger present. Or buying a present for the family as a whole, instead of for each individual child.

Letting the future former recipients of your gifts — or their parents — in on your plans is good form, says Cleveland.

"The earlier you make changes to established traditions, the more time people have to get used to the idea," Post says. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



Share your plan before taking kids off the family holiday gift list. ISTOCK

3
THE

Money 101. Two couples, one year to make them richer

An \$86,000 money makeover



I ran an experiment through 2014 to see how I could improve the financial wealth of two Canadian couples in 12 months. By helping each couple focus on building their net worth, collectively they improved their bottom line by \$86,000. There weren't any lottery tickets or magic wands involved in this financial transformation. Rather, the couples set ambitious, yet realistic, financial goals, and were held accountable for their actions, learning to navigate the financial ropes of homebuying, family planning, investing and debt reduction. You can do it, too. — *Lesley-Anne Scorgie*



Anne-Marie and Peter knocked their financial goals out of the park over the past 12 months. SHUTTERSTOCK

Anne-Marie and Peter

Through their detailed approach to budgeting, discipline, and savvy investment choices, Anne-Marie and Peter improved their net worth by \$49,000 in 12 months. Their net worth in January was \$66,000, and is now \$115,000.

2014 goals

When I first met Anne-Marie and Peter in January, they shared their ambitious financial goals for the year: Become debt-free; start an RESP for their daughter; and save for a down payment for a home.

We focused on debt reduction tactics such as negotiating interest rates on debt, squeezing more out of their budget through living frugally, earning money through raises and promotions, and pumping up their RRSP savings so they can eventually use these funds to purchase their first home through the RRSP Home Buyers' Plan. This tax-advantaged program allows first-time homebuyers to borrow money through their RRSP to put towards a down payment.

Accomplishments

Not only did the couple

Anne-Marie and Peter recap

• Location: Toronto	arrived in May
• Ages: 37 and 33	• Financial savvy: Medium to high — they use budgets, have retirement savings, and are committed to paying off debt
• Occupations: Broadcasting and sports editing	• Rent or own: Rent
• Total household income: \$120,000	• Net worth: \$115,000
• Life stage: First child	

knock their goals out of the park, they also took care of other important financial business, including: Setting up a will; purchasing life insurance; learning the basics about savvy investing; securing a \$10,000 raise for Peter; and creating a five-year financial plan.

When Anne-Marie and Peter crossed the threshold of \$100,000 in net worth, they celebrated their success with an affordable and incredible trip to Ireland.

Greatest challenges for 2015

The largest barriers Anne-Marie and Peter face in 2015

are rising home prices in Toronto, the high costs of child care, and an uncertain stock market that could affect the value of their investments.

Top two tips going forward

- Tip 1 — Anne-Marie and Peter should purchase their home ASAP because their rent is inching close to \$2,000 per month.
- Tip 2 — Get over the financial fears of having a second child. Through increased income, budgeting in advance and by building equity in a home, affording a second child is possible.

THE NAMES OF BOTH COUPLES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THEIR PRIVACY.



Carolina and Jose pulled themselves out of the red and improved their net worth by \$37,000 in 2014. SHUTTERSTOCK

Carolina and Jose

Though their income was tight, and list of financial priorities long, Carolina and Jose pulled themselves out of the red this year and improved their net worth by \$37,000. At the beginning of the year, the couple's net worth was -\$33,700, but increased to \$3,300.

2014 goals

In January, Carolina and Jose expressed their desire to own a home — a place to call their own. They also wanted to make a dent in their debt and save for a trip to Vancouver.

To help achieve their goals, we developed a plan to secure a 10 per cent down payment for a home through an early inheritance from Jose's parents.

We also focused on simple, but effective budgeting, debt reduction and saving skills. Though the couple hasn't taken their vacation to the West Coast, they plan to next year.

Accomplishments

The first major accomplishment for Carolina and Jose was overcoming their mental hurdle of having a lower in-

Carolina and Jose recap

• Location: Calgary	aged five, three and one
• Ages: 33 and 32	• Financial savvy: Medium — they have established a budget, purchased a home, are frugal, and have no retirement savings
• Occupations: Stay-at-home mom and roofing	• Rent or own: Own
• Total household income: \$65,000	• Net worth: \$3,300
• Life stage: Three daughters,	

come. Once they shifted their thinking from not having enough to stretching what they have, they took massive strides toward improving their net worth.

In 2014, they purchased a \$250,000 home, weaned themselves off of student loan repayment assistance, secured a promotion and salary increase of \$10,000 for Jose, saved \$3,600 towards an emergency fund, bought life insurance, established a will, and created a five-year financial plan.

Greatest challenges for 2015

Carolina and Jose must decide

when, and if, to increase their income. As a single-income household, their financial choices are limited and they can't afford to save for their future, let alone that of their children.

Top two tips going forward

- Tip 1 — Carolina should secure a part-time job to bolster the couple's income, allowing them to start saving for retirement.
 - Tip 2 — Pay off their debts.
- LESLEY-ANNE SCORGIE IS A FINANCIAL COACH, FOUNDER OF MEVEST, A FINANCIAL COACHING FIRM, AND BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF WELL-HEELED AND RICH BY THIRTY. FOLLOW @LESLEYSORGIE AND #METROMONEYCOUPLES.

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Your holiday party doesn't have to be as awkward as one straight out of an episode of *The Office*. ISTOCK

Be the star of your office holiday party

Career. An etiquette expert explains why the holiday party is the biggest networking opportunity of the year

LAKSHMI
GANDHI

Metro in New York City

It seems everyone has a horror story about their workplace's annual Christmas party — you don't have to look far to find tales of drunken bosses, inappropriate jokes or regrettable flirtations.

But one expert notes that it's also important not to let those stories distract from the fact that the annual winter gathering is also the perfect time to put your best foot forward in terms of your career.

"It's really one of the most important business days of your year," says Patricia Rossi, an etiquette coach and author of *Everyday Etiquette: How*

to Navigate 101 Common and Uncommon Social Situations.

"It's the one time of the year you can get to someone higher up in the company that you can't get to normally."

Rossi shares these tips on how junior employees can work the room and shine during a holiday party.

Put on a smile and attend the function

"The first thing that you have to do is go," says Rossi.

"The company has invested in it in terms of both time and money in organizing it."

And this isn't the occasion to be fashionably late or to just stop by for a few minutes, either.

"Arrive on time but don't be the last to leave," Rossi advises.

Don't just talk to your office buddies

"You want to move about the cabin — don't latch onto one person and talk to them

all night," says Rossi. For the introverts out there, Rossi says it's also important to remember that almost everyone feels awkward when it comes to holiday parties.

"I was reading something that said something like 90 per cent of people don't know what to say at parties, so you know what? They probably are waiting for someone to talk to them."

Have some conversation topics in your pocket

Because it can be intimidating to saddle up to your company CEO or other high-ranking execs, most employees shy away from doing so.

Rossi says this is a mistake and that with some prep, you'll be able to chat with anyone.

"Have two or three interesting things to talk about," she advises. "If your company VP is a big donor to the Met, that means you know they like art."

Say thank you afterward

Just like any other social event that takes lots of time and planning, it's a good idea to express gratitude after attending.

"Always send a thank-you note to the organizer of the party," says Rossi. "They put it together so that people could have fun and relax."

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Always talk to the spouses

- "Your manager is probably going to be bringing a spouse," notes Rossi. "And the spouse is always nervous about attending these things. But if you talk to them and are engaging, on the ride home she or he will say, 'Oh, I met your employee and they were so lovely, so nice.'"



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Rainmen blown away by Storm

NBL Canada. Halifax falls into second place after loss to The Island



KRISTEN LIPSCOMBE
kristen.lipcombe@metronews.ca

The Halifax Rainmen were stormed out in overtime Sunday.

Despite 22 points from guard Joey Haywood, who returned to the Rainmen roster after a stint playing pro overseas, the Island Storm blew into the Scotiabank Centre to edge the home team 113-106 in overtime.

"At times we played good," the Saint Mary's Huskies alumnus Haywood said after the National Basketball League of Canada game, while taking a break signing autographs for some of the 3,135 fans in attendance.

"First five, 10 minutes, we played well," Haywood said. "We worked as a team, we played really good on defence."

In fact, the Rainmen shot out to a strong 15-2 lead in the first, getting the crowd riled up early, but the Storm started brewing, narrowing the gap to 25-21 before the opening quarter was finished.

By the time the second quarter was done, the Storm had stolen a 48-46 lead. But the action kept spectators guessing, with their hometown hoopsters bouncing back to a 76-69 lead after the third quarter.

It was all tied up at 87-apiece midway through the fourth quarter.



The Halifax Rainmen's Justin Tubbs, centre, shoots between Island Storm's Billy Rush, left, and Michael Martin during NBL regular-season action at the Scotiabank Centre on Sunday. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Look ahead

The Halifax Rainmen are back on the Scotiabank Centre court this Friday, with tip-off against the Moncton Miracles at 7 p.m.

"We made it a very competitive game," said PJ Foster, who put 14 points through the basket. The shooting specialist Foster shot four of eight from beyond the arc.

Power forward Chris Cayole added 18 points, including four three-pointers, while guard Tyrone Watson

scored 14 points and snagged nine rebounds.

For the Island Storm, out of Charlottetown, Bill Rush contributed 23 and Avery Smith added 20 points, while Louis Birdsong and Michael Martin both had eight rebounds.

With the score tied 95-95 with mere seconds left on the clock, Haywood looked to the crowd for encouragement, hollering "let's go" and inciting ear-piercing cheers and chants of "defence!" from the Rainmen's supporters in the stands.

A final layup attempt from guard Seiya Ando was blocked

and the game between the top two teams in the league's Atlantic Division was forced into the extra frame.

Despite three-pointers from Foster and guard Justin Tubbs, along with a crowd-pleasing layup from Haywood to keep his team close, the Storm rattled its way to the win.

"We were kind of gassed," Haywood said. "We've got to play better."

The loss gives Halifax a 5-4 record on the season, and bumps them to second place in division standings, with the Storm trading up for first place.

World juniors

Canada cuts roster down to 25

Canada's world junior journey will continue without Chris Bigras, who was among the first round of cuts despite being on last year's team.

Bigras, fellow defenceman Travis Sanheim and forwards Nick Baptiste, Morgan Klimchuk and Remi Elie were released Sunday evening after a selection camp that included two exhibition games against local university all-stars in Toronto. Canada's roster stands at 25 players with main camp set to open Monday in St. Catharines, Ont.

The message from Benoit Groulx and his coaching staff to those players who were cut was that this is a deep, difficult group to crack.

"We think that the players that we decided to keep are in our plans and I thought also there was a separation between those guys and the players we kept," Groulx said. "That's the reason why we decided to let them go."

Bigras was the biggest surprise because he played all seven games in last year's tournament and as a returning player figured to have a spot. Instead, the 19-year-old Colorado Avalanche prospect will go back to the Ontario Hockey League's Owen Sound Attack.

"Obviously not the outcome I was looking for," said Bigras, who's from Elmville, Ont. "Can't dwell on it right now."

Baptiste, a 2013 pick of the Buffalo Sabres, will go back to playing for the Connor McDavid-less Erie Otters of the OHL.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Meier, Gadoury steal show in Herd win



Timo Meier scored three points in the Mooseheads' win on Saturday night in Bathurst, N.B. METRO FILE

It was the Timo Meier and Philippe Gadoury show for the visiting Halifax Mooseheads in a 5-4 overtime victory against the Acadie-Bathurst Titan on Saturday night at the K.C. Irving Centre.

Meier finished with three points, including the overtime winner, while Gadoury forced the extra session when he potted his second goal of the night on the power play with 1:47 left in regulation time.

Gadoury also had two assists to finish with a four-point game. Meier scored twice as well, including the winner just 38 seconds into the extra session.

The three points for Meier move him to within one of Nikolaj Ehlers for the team lead in scoring. Ehlers, along with netminder Zach Fucale, are away with their respective world junior teams and won't be back until January.

Samuel Leblanc rounded out the scoring for Halifax, which is 7-3 in its last 10 games.

Forward Danny Moynihan added three assists, while netminder Kevin Resop made 18 saves.

Jordan Mahar had two goals and an assist to lead the way offensively for the Titan, who visit the Mooseheads on Wednesday night at Scotiabank Centre.

PHILIP CROUCHER/METRO

Game notes

John Moore, the Mooseheads' radio play-by-play announcer, is reporting blue-liner Matt Murphy was a healthy scratch against Bathurst at the request of general manager Cam Russell ... A crowd of 2,182 fans took in the game.



Sidney Crosby shows a swollen right cheek in this screengrab. He was later diagnosed with mumps. COURTESY PENS TV

Fifth team. Sid the Kid the latest NHL case of mumps

Add Pittsburgh Penguins star Sidney Crosby to the growing list of NHL players dealing with the mumps.

The Penguins announced the diagnosis Sunday after holding the two-time MVP out of games over the weekend as a precaution when swelling developed on the right side of Crosby's face; swelling the team believed

was related to a salivary gland injury Crosby sustained in a game against Carolina on Nov. 29.

The NHL is dealing with a widespread outbreak of the virus, with players from Anaheim, Minnesota, the New York Rangers and the New Jersey Devils among those affected.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Johnny Football fail

Bengals shred Manziel to pieces

Woe, Johnny, woe.

Johnny Manziel spent his first NFL start being chased and taunted by Cincinnati defenders as the Bengals rudely welcomed the hyped rookie quarterback to the league with a 30-0 demolition of the Cleveland Browns on Sunday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Speedskating

Hamelin takes gold at World Cup

Charles Hamelin won gold in the men's 1,000 metres at a short-track speedskating World Cup, in a six-medal Sunday for Canada, which took bronze with Marianne St-Gelais (women's 1,000 metres), William Preudhomme and Kasandra Bradette (men's and women's 500) as well as both relay teams.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Leafs' Reimer pulls a shootout shutout

A thriller at the ACC.

Kings rally from 2-0 to lead 3-2, but Leafs tie in the third to win their fifth straight

James Reimer stopped all three shooters to give the Toronto Maple Leafs a 4-3 shootout win over the Los Angeles Kings on Sunday.

Joffrey Lupul scored the lone goal for Toronto in the shootout. Tyler Bozak and Mike Santorelli missed.

Marian Gaborik, Dustin Brown and Anze Kopitar all missed for Los Angeles.

Los Angeles rallied from a 2-0 deficit and led 3-2 in the third before the Leafs forced the overtime.

Toronto has won five straight and gone 9-1-1 since a 9-2 humiliation at the hands of the visiting Nashville Predators on Nov. 18. The Leafs also improved to 13-0-0 when scoring the first goal.

It was a game that took a while to reach the boil but the third period was fast-paced and entertaining. The Kings outshot the Leafs 33-30 in regulation.

Santorelli, Cody Franson and James van Riemsdyk scored for the Leafs before an Air Canada Centre crowd of 19,219 on a rare 5 p.m. local



Toronto Maple Leafs forward James van Riemsdyk celebrates after scoring the Leafs' third goal to tie the game 3-3 against the L.A. Kings in the third period in Toronto on Sunday. NATHAN DENETTE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

time Sunday start.

Justin Williams, Dwight King and Gaborik scored for the defending Stanley Cup champion Kings.

Jonathan Quick had to be sharp in the Kings goal after Jake Muzzin was called for hooking with 5:05 remaining, as he impeded Nazem Kadri

from behind on a breakaway.

The second period has belonged to the Leafs this season with a league-high 41 goals. But things went south this time in the second when the Kings pulled even at 2-2 with a pair of goals in three minutes 44 seconds as the Toronto defence wobbled late in the period.

Toronto, which led 2-0 after 20 minutes, was outshot 11-6 in the second period.

The Leafs started Sunday as the league's highest-scoring team, averaging 3.38 goals per game. They were 14-0-0 when scoring at least four goals and 16-2-2 when scoring at least three. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries

March 21 - April 20

You will need to be ruthless with yourself this week, especially on the work front where you are clearly doing too much.

♉ Taurus

April 21 - May 21

You won't find it difficult to get your own way today but don't go too far and give others the impression you think you are better than them.

♊ Gemini

May 22 - June 21

You may be fired up with enthusiasm for a new plan or project but not everyone is convinced. Does that matter?

♋ Cancer

June 22 - July 23

You need to face up to your problems and let certain people know that you will no longer be their whipping boy.

♌ Leo

July 24 - Aug. 23

If someone annoys you over the next two or three days, they are sure to regret it. You are in no mood to turn the other cheek. Watch out world!

♍ Virgo

Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

You seem to be in one of those moods when you are interested only in extremes. You will either do something very good or very bad today — there is no middle ground. Either way you will have fun.

♎ Libra

Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

You will be in a confident mood today but you might try something you know is forbidden. In the long-term, you will certainly regret it.

♏ Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Let everyone know what you expect of them today. Some may grumble and say you are exceeding your powers, but rather than have them think you are weak.

♐ Sagittarius

Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

Treat others as equals or they will make life difficult for you. And never take your nearest and dearest for granted.

♑ Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

Try not to come on too strong today or you could push away people who should be your friends and allies.

♒ Aquarius

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

You are determined to finish that long list of chores. And that's good because the next few days are potentially some of your most creative of the year.

♓ Pisces

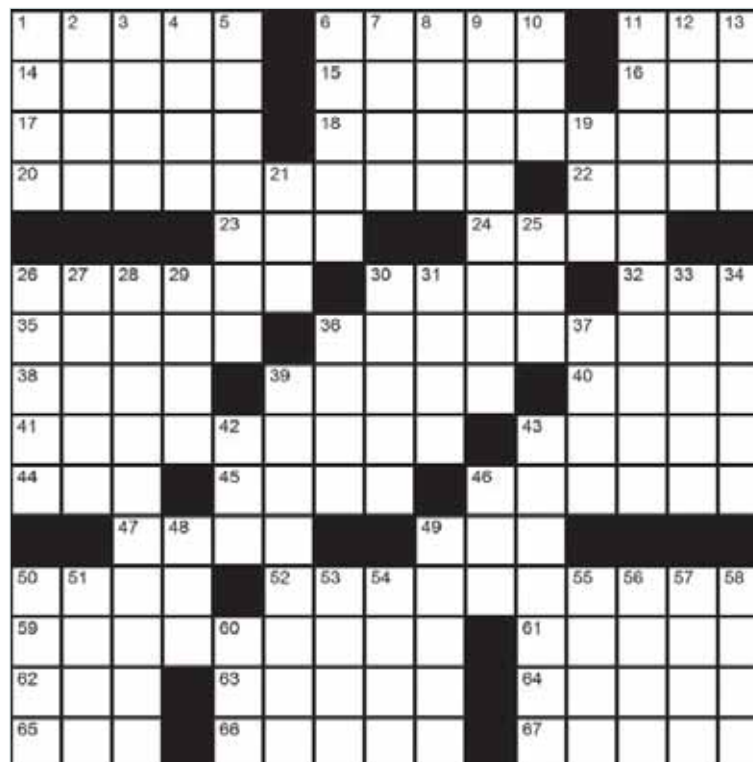
Feb. 20 - March 20

A rival will throw down a challenge today and if you are smart you will pick it up and throw it right back at them. Most likely they will be so surprised that they immediately back off.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan

Across

1. Knowledge of words, for short
6. Director Hal
11. 100 cents [abbr.]
14. "...the bombs bursting ___": 2 wds.
15. Chirp
16. Romance
17. Opera tune: "Nessun ___"
18. Song by Canadian singer Mac DeMarco; or, Shakespearean times of youth: 2 wds.
20. Painter's display: 2 wds.
22. Loonies
23. Dallas, ___
24. ___ of passage
26. MuchMusic fare
30. ___ (Public event, '60s-style)
32. '___' for Camrose
35. Christina Aguilera's "___ to You"
36. Group speaking on behalf of cartoon characters: 2 wds.
38. Kennel noises
39. Sprite
40. Sonny ___ (Montreal-based artist)
41. One of a popular candy: 2 wds.
43. Sigmund's surname
44. Heidi Montag's hubby ...his initials-sharers
45. Grannies: German
46. Like ceramics material
47. Plummet



49. Litigate
50. End in ___ (Draw): 2 wds.
52. Works by Chet-camp, NS artist Elizabeth LeFort (b.1914 - d.2005): 2 wds.
59. Folklore
61. Birthplace of

- Columbus
62. Grampus
63. Take in once more
64. Toronto ___ Centre
65. ___-i-Noor Diamond
66. 'Disk' suffixes
67. Pilotless aircraft practice run, briefly

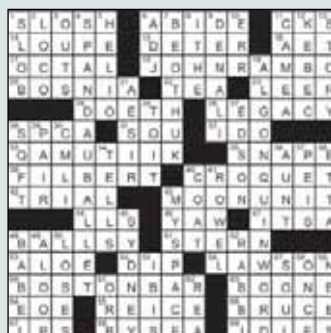
Down

1. Ricky Martin's "Livin' La ___ Loca"
2. ___ about (Circa): 2 wds.
3. Wagon
4. I like = 'I' ___
5. Songstress Toni
6. When TV news

- airs: 2 wds.
7. Cotton ___
8. Prefix to 'copter'
9. Princess Eugenie's sister
10. Financial rpt.'s 'until now'
11. Toronto Raptors head coach: 2 wds.

12. Ravel's "Ma Mere ___" (Mother Goose)
13. "Friends" friend
19. Polka's pal
21. Guys
25. 'Benedict' suffix
26. Lab containers
27. "Let ___!" (start)
28. Manitoba: Nick-name of the Red River Floodway: 2 wds.
29. Gaelic
30. Cardboard containers
31. The Queen's cypher: letter + Roman Numeral + letter
33. Matter
34. Cram
36. "___ Las Vegas" (1964)
37. Fashion model Ms. Delevingne
39. Brochure
42. The ___ (Sault Ste. Marie's nickname)
43. Full-___ (Established/qualified)
46. Theatrical tip
48. Showbiz Clue#1
49. Terrier types
50. "Star Trek" episode, ___ Time
51. Newbie
53. Flemish painter, Jacob van ___ the Elder
54. S-shaped moulding
55. Raise
56. Poet's preposition
57. Continue: 2 wds.
58. Rational
60. Mining extract

Friday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers



Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Friday's Sudoku



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\$65
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DOWN

FROM **\$26,899** | SAVE **\$3335**

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WEEKLY

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*Offer is subject to change without notice. You Pick Stocking Stuffers on 2015 Santa Fe and 2014 Accent stock models only. See O'Regan's Dartmouth Hyundai for details.

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